

2 new WWII reports again target Swiss

New York Times News Service

GENEVA — Switzerland finds itself once again in the glare of international scrutiny with the release this week of two official reports that are expected to erode further cherished national myths about the country's wartime actions.

The long-awaited reports — one on the fate of Holocaust era bank accounts and the other on Swiss treatment of wartime refugees — are significant chapters yet in the four-year dissection of Switzerland's role as a neutral country in World War II.

The report on how Swiss banks handled deposits by Jews seeking to hide assets from the Nazis, which is due to be released Monday, has already provoked consid-

erable jockeying among the banks, American Jewish groups and the investigating commission itself, which is headed by former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker.

The banks, which shouldered the expense of the three-year inquiry, are accusing Jewish groups of trying to pump up the amounts found. At the same time, they are touting commission findings that there was no banking conspiracy to block heirs of Holocaust victims from reclaiming funds even though the report documents instances of insensitive conduct at individual banks.

While embarrassing to Switzerland, the fallout from the report is likely to be confined to the banks and the American Jewish groups, with many Swiss seeing the dispute as largely finished because of the

\$1.25 billion settlement to reimburse the heirs of Holocaust victims agreed to by the country's two major banks last year.

The settlement was unpopular, and spurred a backlash of anti-American and anti-Jewish feeling, but most Swiss felt that the banks should give back money that was not rightfully theirs.

The second report was commissioned by the government and is to be released on Friday. It will deal with the sensitive issue of the country's treatment of fleeing Jews and others seeking refuge in the neutral country during World War II.

While Swiss officials like to point out that they accepted some 30,000 refugees, they also turned back about an equal number, many of whom were probably killed by Nazis.

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